



# NEWS

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## **PENNSYLVANIA AG PRODUCERS URGED TO APPLY NOW FOR CONSERVATION PROGRAMS**

HARRISBURG, November 23, 2005- Pennsylvania agricultural producers and other landowners or operators interested in financial assistance for installation of new conservation practices through the Agricultural Management Assistance Program (AMA), Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP), and the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) need to apply by December 2, 2005 to be included in the initial ranking that will determine funding priorities for 2006, announced the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Requests for assistance typically exceed available funding; applications are rated to give highest priority to projects with the greatest environmental benefit.

AMA, EQIP, and WHIP offer financial and technical assistance to improve wildlife habitat, install conservation practices to reduce erosion, improve water quality, improve grazing land, and manage animal waste. Conservation treatment activities are carried out in accordance with a conservation plan that is developed with the landowner or manager. Applicants need to have control of the land. For AMA and EQIP applicants need to be agricultural producers and funding is targeted to agricultural land. Practices intended primarily for production purposes are not eligible for financial assistance.

WRP provides wetland restoration and conservation easement opportunities for private landowners to restore and protect wetlands throughout the state. Applicants need to have control of the land. Wetlands suitable for restoration and conservation easements under WRP must have been impacted due to agriculture activities to be eligible.

Landowners and producers interested in learning more about these voluntary conservation programs should contact their local USDA NRCS office, or visit <http://www.pa.nrcs.usda.gov>.

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